

## **Idaho Operation Lifesaver 2004 Report Annual Report**

### **Presentations and Safety Booths Activities**

During 2004, Idaho Operation Lifesaver presenters, at groups ranging from preschool to senior citizens gave presentations to 11,667 people. Of the 439 presentations given, 304 were to 8,953 Driver Education students.

Another 101,028 people were contacted at fair and mall safety booths, regarding the potential dangers that exist at highway/ rail grade crossings and around trains in general.

At the state fairs, a train set is given away nightly on the evening news. During the train giveaway, selected portions of the OL presentation are broadcast live. This enables us to reach thousands more with our safety message.

Idaho Operation Lifesaver participated in 9 community events and parades that featured the street safety train. An estimated 75,200 people received the Operation Lifesaver message via this tool. The parade train, while a great hit with the crowds at parades and riders during special events, also receives extensive media coverage.

In addition to the nightly television coverage received at the fairs, news organizations continue doing stories concerning safety around highway-railroad intersections and railroad property. These stories have been positive and helpful in spreading the Operation Lifesaver message. Media coverage during "Officer On A Train" enforcement runs is extensive.

Two PSA campaigns were conducted during the year, one from January to March, and another, which started in December and will run through March 2005.

### **Enforcement**

Six "Officer on a Train" enforcement runs were conducted during 2004, with participation from city, county and state law enforcement agencies. Local media covered all 6 runs, and even captured one motorist that barely missed being hit by the train. The motorist swerved into the other lane to beat the train. Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on ones view point, the motorist didn't make it very far; he was stopped and went straight to jail.

### **Media Coverage**

### **Crossing Incidents**

Crossing incidents increased in 2004 compared to 2003. For 2004, there were 24 crossing collisions reported resulting in 4 deaths and 12 people injured. In 2003, total incidents were 18 with 2 fatalities and 6 people injured.

### **Student Speech Contest**

The driver's education speech contest for high school students is an ongoing event. The 2004 winners were Melinda Lewis from Oreanna and Shandy Lam from Potlatch. Both girls represented Idaho at the National Symposium in San Antonio, giving their presentations during the awards luncheon, and as usual, were one of the highlights of the conference.

New York Operation Lifesaver is working to obtain funding and have Shandy give her presentation there this April. We can all be proud of our student speakers. They have all been an impressive group.

### **Volunteer Recruitment**

Three presenter-training classes were conducted during the year resulting in 8 active new presenters. We have 2 new Area Coordinators in Northern Idaho, which will help increase presentations in that area.

### **2004 National Symposium**

The National Symposium was held during July in San Antonio, Texas. Four presenters from Idaho were able to attend, along with both student speech winners.

### **Region 8 Workshop**

Idaho will host the 2005 Operation Lifesaver Region 8 workshop. The workshop will be June 20 to 23 in Boise, Idaho. Subjects to be addressed include

the new federal rules on quiet zones, a session on engineering to help presenters better understand active crossing warning devices, a half day workshop where presenters will hear presentations from other presenters, see and use new materials for presentations. An "Officer On A Train" enforcement run will be conducted during the workshops, with arrangements being made to afford all who attend the workshop the opportunity to ride on the train during the enforcement runs.

Idaho's goal is to bring all presenters to this workshop. In order to facilitate this, scholarships will be awarded to help cover the cost of lodging and registration. Presenters should contact their area coordinators or the State Coordinator regarding this issue.

### **Goals for 2005**

Idaho Operation Lifesaver's goals for 2005 are to

1. Continue the Speech Contest
2. Conduct 2 media campaigns
3. Conduct 8 Officer on a train runs statewide
4. Broaden the Adopt a Crossing program statewide
5. Continue increasing the presenter pool statewide
6. Continue to increase presentations to driving age people.
7. Involve the parade train in as many events as possible
8. Staff the 2 state fairs, county fairs, and 5 mall booths, assist with the Spokane Interstate Fair.
9. Work on reducing the number of crossing incidents that occur in Idaho

**From the State Coordinator**

During 2004, we witnessed a 33% increase in crossing collisions and fatalities in Idaho. People injured in crossing collisions increased 50%. Our worst areas were District 1, (North Idaho) and District 3, (Mountain Home to the Oregon Border).

To reverse this trend of needless crossing incidents, fatalities and injuries, I plan on spending at least 2 weeks a month travelling through the state, working with both the area coordinators and presenters. I also plan on working with law enforcement and railroads setting up enforcement programs.

Additionally, I will be working with Joe Peaglar, Rail Highway Safety Coordinator for the Idaho Transportation Department. We will identify our high hit areas, using the last five year's incidents as reference, targeting these areas for additional education and enforcement, and along with Joe, will visit and inspect the crossings in the target areas for potential engineering improvements.

As mentioned previously, we will be hosting the Region 8 Workshop in Boise this year. I urge each of you to plan on attending. In addition to the information you receive, you will have the opportunity to improve your presenter skill and hear presentations from presenters throughout the state and region. You will also have an opportunity to ride a train during an enforcement run, learning how they are conducted. A workshop on the do's and don'ts when encountered by the media will help you know how to respond if a reporter shows up while you are giving a presentation or working a safety booth.

Another advantage to attending the regional workshop is you will have the opportunity to network and have a great time with people who share your interest and dedication in public safety. My goal is to help get every Idaho presenter that can attend, to these workshops.

I know we have some of the most dedicated people in the nation here in Idaho. Working together we can and will reverse last years increase in collisions, fatalities and injuries. I know we can achieve our goal of NO motorist or pedestrian incidents in this state.

I urge you to call me at the office, 208-236-5626 or on our cell phone 208-705-5626 to identify time we can work together in your area or for anything I can help with.

Again, Thank You for your dedication and participation in making our communities and state a safer place for all.

Chris Arvas  
Idaho State Coordinator

<p><b>Idaho Operation Lifesaver State Meetings February 10, 2005 June 20, 2005 November 3, 2005 All meetings will be held in Boise. Please contact the State Coordinator if you wish to attend.</b></p>
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Mike Hysell  
Idaho Rail Labor Representative

Jerry Hardesty  
Union Pacific Railroad

Dick Emerson, US Bank  
Representing Idaho Citizens

To Be Announced  
Idaho Sheriff's Association

To Be Announced  
Idaho Chief of Police Association

Gaylord Perez  
Federal Railroad Administration

### **Area Coordinators**

#### **Region 1**

Phyllis Jay  
208-263-8417 x 214

Joel Minor  
208-267-1274

Jonelle Greear  
208-772-6055

#### **Region 2**

Randy Martz  
509-758-8389

#### **Region 3**

Grant Baxter  
541-889-6070

June Hickenbotham – Roby  
208-468-5580

Mike Anderson  
208-386-5515

Carol Gabbard  
208-334-0334

#### **Region 4**

Loyd Overlin  
208-733-8188

#### **Region 5**

To Be Announced

#### **Region 6**

To Be Announced

#### **State Coordinator**

Chris Arvas 208-236-5626